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and has continued to be so, notwithstanding the Union. It is, however, in contemplation to join it with the London establishment.

The introduction of mail-coaches has not only greatly improved the system of the Post Office, but has been attended with the greatest advantages to the general interests of Ireland. Previous to their introduction, the state of the roads was such, that it commonly took five or six days to perform a journey from Dublin to Cork, and it is said that persons, in those days, deemed it a matter of more serious importance to undertake a long journey through Ireland; than many do at present to undertake a voyage to America. The first mail-coaches commenced running from Dublin to Cork and Belfast on the 5th of July, 1790. A regular improvement in the state of the Irish roads has continued from that time to the present, and they are now allowed to be amongst the best in Europe.

"THE AMULET."

In our usual course of noticing the Annuals—one at a time—as among the best of the present year's production we turn to the "Amulet," which, within a modest and unassuming binding, possesses more of beauty and excellence than is to be met with in several of its competitors, who wear a much more attractive and splendid exterior. Of the ten elegant engravings with which it is embellished we prefer the "Gipsy Mother," by Wilkie; and "The Watches on the Beach," by Timbrell. As to the general contents of the work we cannot say much: scarcely one of the stories reach mediocrity, while the poetry is of a very common place order. The volume has one good quality, however; several of the sketches furnish information, in a pleasing form, on subjects well calculated to interest the general reader. Of those the description of "The Water-Mole of Australia," by George Bennett, Esq., will serve as an instance; while "The Gipsy Mother," by Mrs. Hoffman, may be taken as a fair specimen of the stories in the work.

THE GIPSY MOTHER.

"Mercy!—mercy! Oh! have mercy on him!—he is young, very young. I will kneel to you for mercy."

Such were the words, uttered almost in the shriek of terror, yet by a voice of singular sweetness, which arrested the steps of William Hughes, as he was dragging towards the horse-pond a young gipsy boy, whom he had caught in the fact of stealing his mother's poultry. The depredations had been of late numerous, and much greater than the little farm could bear. William was very angry, and justly bent on punishing the culprit; but he paused at the cry of distress. The gipsy girl forced her way through the brake, and stood before him in all the agitation fear and affection could inspire, again fervently imploring his pity.

"We have neither father nor mother to teach us any thing. I am his elder—but it is seldom boys obey girls. I will watch over him and guide him: he will never, *never* come here again if you will forgive him now."

William did not believe this, although he had known instances of promises being kept by the tribe; and he was also aware that the pleader would have preferred the ducking he meditated, to the transportation he might cause. But he could not bring himself to inflict the punishment she would unquestionably share so acutely; and he contented himself with giving a slight shake and a heavy threat to the culprit, who bounded far away the moment he was released, leaving his still trembling sister to receive the reproaches too likely to be poured upon her head, and through her on that of all her tribe.

But Ayeshe's gratitude was so fervently, yet modestly expressed, her sensibility was so genuine, and her helplessness so deprecating (as one of a degraded and reprobated caste), that William said not a word beyond that of warning her against approaching his father's premises; adding in a softened tone, as he perceived the liquid lustre of those eyes which still swam in tears, and the pearly whiteness of teeth displayed by her still pleading lips:—

"Of course, I mean, keep the boy away: of yourself, my girl, I never knew harm of any kind."

William strode away rapidly towards the house; but the steps of the gipsy maiden were slow and disconsolate. And, when she had re-passed the stile, and crossed the meadow, often did she peer through the hedge to see if he were indeed inclosed within the walls of his father's dwelling; if he were indeed beyond the ken of eyes which she thought could discover him in the depths of the earth, and offer him the fond homage of her thanks, her admiration, and (though she knew it not) her love.

Neither Benoni nor Ayeshe were again found near Farmer Hughes's barns; but never did William go forth to the field, or the market, without seeing, in some green dell or narrow lane, the slight form, beaming eyes, and blushing cheek of the young gipsy. Never did she essay to offer him any sample of her art as a fortune-teller; never did she appear employed on any vagrant errand: either she was seated, making cabbage-nets or baskets for sale, or she was walking steadily forward towards some of the neighbouring hamlets. It was impossible not to return the "good-morrow," so gently whispered—not to acknowledge the grateful recognition of one evidently so well disposed.

Thus, naturally and blamelessly, commenced an acquaintance which, by degrees, on the side of William, ripened into friendship; for his heart had need of a confidant, since times were hard, and his father's flock was too numerous for the pasture. Thence the transition to love was soon made; and, alas! from love to error.

There was not a man of better character in that part of Sussex which he inhabited than Farmer Hughes, nor one whose family had hitherto done more credit to their father's precept and example. Bitter was the agony of William, when he felt himself to be the first who should bring shame on the house where he had been held the especial darling; bitter still the pang of separation from a fond, loving, tender creature, who, however the world might despise and reject her, he knew to possess an understanding and capacity beyond any female in his circle of companions, and whose only fault, so far as he had seen, was that of having loved *him* too well.

Still, there was "a great gulf between them," and it was but right that he should feel the value of his own situation as the son of an honest man, religiously brought up, efficiently educated, whom younger brothers looked up to for example, and sisters considered their protector. Could he hope, or even desire, that his family should receive amongst them a creature brought up among profligate pilferers, ignorant of the common decencies of life, averse to labour, unconscious of honesty, and deemed by all a *heathen* and an *outcast*? Must he wring, perhaps *break*, the heart of his mother, and bring "his father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave," by an union with one at whom every finger in the parish would point with contempt? Yet, could he forsake her? She asked not, expected not, the reparation others (no better perhaps) would have demanded; but did not her submission, her silence plead?

Such were the thoughts continually racking the heart of William, whilst yet the guilty secret rested in his own bosom; and to his corroding cares was added the hourly dread of discovery. Happily for him the whole neighbourhood were engrossed by a subject of such absorbing interest, that neither his untimely walks, haggard looks, nor impoverished appearance, excited curiosity; though within a short time he had been the smartest-frocked youth in the parish at church, and the best appointed player on the cricket-ground.

At this period that truly patriotic nobleman, the earl of Egremont (whose comprehensive charity at once embraces the widest objects of benevolence, and stoops to the minutest details) was providing the means of emigration to Canada for numbers of persons who found no market for their labour on his over-populated lands. Farmer Hughes had not the happiness of being his lordship's tenant, for his small farm belonged to a small proprietor; but, as he was situated in a district belonging to him, and had in his large family at least two sons who might go out with great advantage, and were likely, from their age and abilities, to share the beneficent intentions of one whose bounties flow in no narrow stream, he was amongst the

most anxious inquirers on the subject, especially as his son Frank, a youth about sixteen, ardently desired to embark in the projected enterprise.

Whilst all around him were thus engaged, William, the altered, abstracted William, had beheld his son—had pressed his lips on the “velvet cheek” of infancy—and felt in one strangely mingled emotion the charm of paternity, the bliss of loving, and the self-reproach of having already injured a dear and innocent being, whom it was not less his duty to protect, than it would have been his rich recompence to cherish. Tears were in the eyes, and anguish in the heart, of the young father; but he suffered not his feelings to appear. And Ayeshe was too happy in her babe to have room for regret: her very being was absorbed in the creature to which she had given existence. A new world seemed to have been granted to her prayers; and never queen rejoiced more proudly in her empire: of shame she had no sense, of want she had no fear; and in the delicious *present* all care for the *future* was banished.

But a change soon came over this spirit; and deep thought, solicitude to very heart-ache, sat on the brow of the young gipsy mother. When William saw this, he imputed it to the desertion of her brother, who had deeply resented her conduct, as “unworthy of a daughter of their tribe, which held aloof from contamination with strangers.” But the good old woman, whom he had induced to receive and attend her, imputed it to conversation she had overheard relative to the departure of many young men, his own name and his brother Frank’s being mentioned as those whom their father desired to settle in life through this medium.

“Does she believe, then, that I am capable of forsaking her, and my poor child, without even preparing her for my departure?”

“No; she fears that you will refuse to go, and offend your father: it is the fear of bringing harm on you that afflicts her. Even in her sleep she is troubled for you, and urges you to set out; and she has some scheme always working in her mind by which she hopes to help you, or at least comfort you.”

William could believe this; for never had one selfish wish escaped the lips of Ayeshe. But much was he startled when, on his next visit, he learned that she had set out the day before, with her babe in her arms, and her bundle in her hand, neither signifying the place where she was going, nor the time when she might return; saying only that she would be neither disgrace nor hindrance any longer to her beloved William, who might trust her safely with his child.

A day and night had passed, but she could not have gone far; and William lost not a moment in setting out to seek her. But neither dell nor dingle, coppice nor shed, the haunts of her people, nor the hiding-places of her solitude, gave indications of her having been there of late; and he returned to his father’s house under such perturbation of spirit that, when the younger branches of the family had retired, his over-burthened heart flung itself, by full confession, on the compassion of his parents.

His mother wept over his sad story, and wished “she could have taken the little one;” his father was grave and sorrowful, rather than austere: after long ruminating on the case, he observed, that “one of two ideas had unquestionably influenced the poor girl—generosity towards William, since by withdrawing herself she had given him a liberty necessary for his welfare; or, an incapability of confining herself any longer to the habits of domestic life. Under either circumstance, although it was his duty to repent the past, he might consider himself relieved, and so far happy.”

This William held to be impossible; but he found great comfort in the kindness of his parents, and his mind assented to much of the reasoning they used to soothe and re-assure him. He believed that *both* the causes mentioned co-operated to produce Ayeshe’s conduct, since he well knew her disinterested love and capability of self sacrifice, and also her enthusiastic attachment to the woodland haunts of her childhood, her passionate admiration for the beauties of nature, and of the changes and conflicts of the elements. Often had he listened, with

surprise and delight, to the bursts of untutored eloquence which broke from her lips, when she bailed the first tufts of violets or primroses that had met her eye—described the effects of a spring shower, or the awful impressions of a thunder storm; and at such moments became conscious of the sympathies which drew her so closely to his heart as to obliterate all that was revolting in her situation.

By entering into his feelings, and aiding him in his enquiries, his father became to him the friend and companion he required; and by degrees his sense of loss subsided, and his interest in the general duties of life returned. He listened attentively to the letters received from the first emigrants from his own village, and to the suggestions of his young brother; and though he was dearer than ever to his parents, they saw too clearly that he would never completely recover his spirits and energies whilst he remained at home, and doubted not his abilities and success if he went abroad; they therefore hailed with pleasure the slow indications he now gave of following in the track of many of his young companions.

In the spring of 1835, the same bounty was renewed, and the same stirring among the poor and enterprising was afloat; and William, with his father, set out to Petworth, a distance of about sixteen miles, in order to inquire how far the brothers might be permitted to share in the benefits offered by his lordship’s munificence. They went soon after sunrise, and reached the village of ———, which was about two miles from the park, about eleven, not sorry to find themselves at the curate’s house, as he had married a distant relation of the farmer’s and would not only receive them hospitably, but probably give them information on the subject of their enquiries.

They were received courteously by the clergyman’s daughter, who said, “As it was a prayer-day, her father was then in the church;” to which place, after taking a draught of beer, the elder Hughes followed him, but the young man sat down to enjoy a shady parlour; and finding the late occupant did not return thither, he took the liberty of looking at a book she held on their entrance, and had left open at the place where she was reading; it was the second page of the story of “Grace Huntley” in the “Amulet” of that year.

William read, and read, not only with his eyes, but his mind, his very soul; audible sobs, quick gushing tears, succeeded; his intended voyage, his long-nurtured resolution, his present situation, were alike forgotten. Grace Huntley on the one hand, and his own infant child on the other, possessed him wholly; and at length, dropping the book, he exclaimed, “And did *she* do this?—a poor, weak, trembling, and loving woman! Could she thus wrench away the fondest, strongest chords of existence to save her child from sin, even after that child had been contaminated? and shall I suffer my innocent babe to become the associate of the vile from its birth? No! I will rather search every corner, from sea to sea, to seek and snatch it from perdition; and God grant I may save its mother also!”

The energy with which these words were pronounced drew the attention of the curate’s daughter from the kitchen, where she was employed at the moment; and the sounds she had heard, aided by the flushed cheek and evident emotion of William, communicated the idea of his being angry at being left alone, and the good girl began eagerly to apologize.

“My father will be here presently, I am certain: it is true I ought to have told you that his absence would be longer than usual, because he had a christening to perform.”

William, whose thoughts were “running to and fro through all the earth,” mechanically echoed the words, “a christening!”

“Yes; a very extraordinary one, being, not only that of an adult (which rarely occurs), but that of a gipsy.”

“A gipsy!” reiterated William with more animation.

“Yes; she came to this place last year, about harvest, alone, and having the appearance of being worn down with long travel. She never attempted to gain money by the usual arts of her people, but appeared singularly de-

sirous of being received amongst our poor as one of themselves, and especially to obtain the best knowledge; for this purpose she crept into the church, where she generally sat behind a pillar. She then loitered much about the school-house, asking many questions of the children; and, finally, made an acquaintance with me, which led to one with my father. She has been now many months under instruction from us both, and has, indeed, well deserved our care; or, of course, she would not have been admitted by my father into the church of Christ, especially under her circumstances; for, alas! poor thing!—oh, here they come, both your father and mine."

William was utterly unable to speak, yet felt as if more than life depended upon the answer to a single question; and whilst the curate was warmly shaking him by the hand, and praising him for the step he was about to take, he was utterly unable to arrange his thoughts, or command his feelings, so as to utter one word in reply. The good man imputed this to a natural feeling in one who knew that his poverty influenced him, rather than his wishes, in the affair of which his father had spoken; and to relieve him, addressed his daughter, saying,

"Well, Anna, the deed is done; your poor *protege* is become one of us now; and I humbly trust, nay, doubt not, will be found hereafter one of those who were 'brands snatched from the burning.' At her own request she has taken your name at the font: remember this when you see her, and do not call her Ayeshe."

"Ah!" cried William, "my conscience, my heart surmised the truth! Oh, Sir, what shall I say? You have christened my poor wanderer; you have instructed her to that end; for which may the God you serve especially bless you? And now will you marry her to me?"

"Do it!—I pray your worship, do it? I intreat it, who am his father; for never did I feel so much for any living creature as I did just now for that young woman. I am, I fear, a proud man; I should not like William's marriage to be talked about; but I do wish him to take a wife with him, for surely 'it is not good for man to be alone' in the desert; and who so proper to be his helpmate as her to whom he owes atonement, and who has so anxiously sought to render his faith, her faith—his God, her God?"

"Let him that hath sinned, sin no more,' is, of course, my language. Be assured, farmer, that I will publish the bans, marry them in my own church, and your parish be none the wiser. I doubt not that this poor girl will prove an excellent wife; but we must respect the prejudices which guard conduct, and not induce our villagers to seek connexions among vagabonds: years may pass, and not produce another Ayeshe."

To William she was produced at this moment by her young benefactress, who had beckoned him into her father's study, and he beheld her, not only with a fond approbation, but a delight he had never known before; for, under the improving hand of her female friend, her personal appearance had been, on this eventful day, altered exceedingly for the better. The gipsy-cloak and head-gear were discarded for the neat and delicately clean habiliments of the Sussex peasantry, and her fine features and happy countenance were seen in all their beauty.

But who shall paint the altered mind—the joy, the gratitude, the sense of heavenly interference which naturally possessed a being so singularly situated? Ayeshe had cherished, nay, she had lived on the hope of one day following William, and presenting to him a son whose virtues and endowments should not only ensure love from the father, but win for herself a purer regard than she had yet inspired. To effect so high and sacred a purpose, she had sought the instruction which eventually rendered her the participator of those blessings desired for her child.

But never had she dared to hope for the happiness now

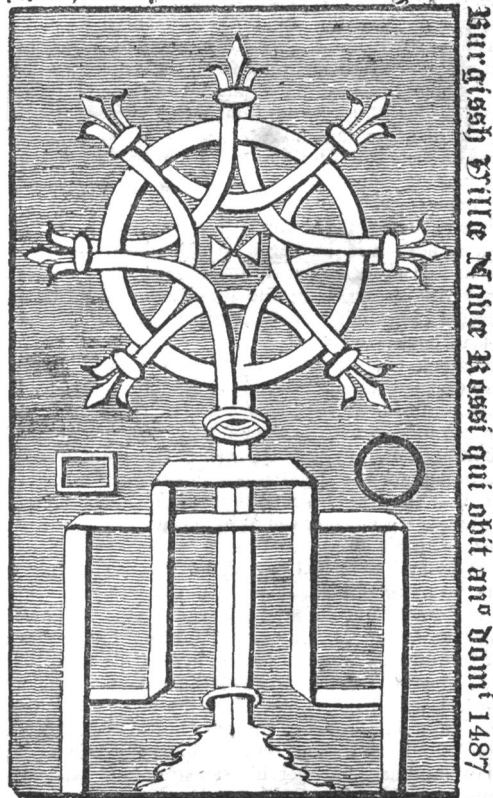
promised—to become William's lawful wife with the consent of his parents—to offer her child to their caresses—to sail with him over the wide ocean far beyond the voice of reproach or the smile of scorn—to labour with him and for him, the blue skies above them, the free breeze blowing over them, and the green woods around them—to prove her own powers of aiding life in a situation new to him, and her acquirements in things long valued by him; each was such a sweet, deep, heart-moving joy, that she felt almost oppressed by the sense of her own blissful emotions.

All things went well with our petitioners: William was married to Anna the day before they sailed, and the greater part of his family accompanied them to the seaport. The parting was necessarily painful, not only to one who bade adieu to many dear ties, but to her who felt, in no common measure, veneration and gratitude for those who had looked on her in her low estate; therefore,

"Some natural tears she dropped, but wiped them soon;"

for she beheld her son in his dear father's arms, and remembered that she was no longer a gipsy-mother.

Hic jacit Patricius Conway quod



ANCIENT CROSS IN THE CHURCHYARD OF ST. MARY'S, NEW ROSS.

Sir—I send you a rough draught of a cross with the inscription, which is cut on a tomb-stone in the churchyard of St. Mary's, at New Ross, in the county of Wexford; the interlacing in the foundation of the cross is extremely curious, and the word *Nove*, or new, before Ross, is a circumstance worthy of notice at so early a period as 1487.

Here lies Patrick Conway, Burgess of the town of New Ross, who died Anno Domini, 1487.

In the same churchyard there is also a similar cross on another stone, but not in as good preservation as the former; it bears the following inscription in old English character:

Hic jacit Denis Idam and his wife, Joan Hanroke, whose families this tomb received, 1577.

The word *Idam* is disputed.

Wexford, September, 1834.

C. D.

* The original Ayeshe had not the fault of this, but all her merit; since she crept out of the most infamous neighbourhood in London to obtain instruction, and became a Christian, previous to her marriage.